The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WHOLE NO. 878. WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1928. VOL. 17, NO. 47.

The opportunity is often lost by deliberating.—Syrus.

NON-PARTISAN POLICY IS AMERICAN SYSTEM

Political party lines in every section of the country are being obliterated. Non-partisanship, first advocated by organized labor, is generally accepted.

The extent of this movement is indicated in Congress, where independents have weakened party discipline and destroyed party leadership.

The party conference, with no power to enforce decisions, has replaced the party caucus whose dictates formerly drove insurgents into line.

Independents in both major parties now consider their party allegiance a matter of form rather than principle.

This practice has met such popular approval that reactionaries no longer cry against "the European system of political blocs."

The non-partisan system is distinctively American. In European parliaments the political groups join other groups en bloc, while in this country the independency movement is confined to individual lawmakers who change positions on each particular bill.

Strong, disciplined political parties are possible in Europe because faith in individual effort is subordinated to faith in government.

The opposite is true in the United States, where individualism is more highly developed than in any other part of the world. In fact, government is considered but an aid to individualism; is considered a protector of natural rights and against a majority denial of these rights.

In Europe, a background of centuries of kingly rule, exaltation of the state and compulsory military training have developed obedience in men that is reflected in party discipline.

American individualism detracts from party loyalty and party spirit. Here, government is considered a means, rather than an end, as in Europe.

Political methods in America and Europe are not comparable because of these deep-seated contradictory fundamentals.

If the organized workers recall these facts and keep present non-partisan tendencies in mind, they will enter the forthcoming primaries and campaign with stronger convictions of the faith that is in them and they will have a more enthusiastic certainty of success.

MR. FREE HAS SLY "JOKER"; WOULD END SAFETY AT SEA

Washington, Feb. 4.—Congressman Free of California has made a sly attack on the La Follette seamen's law and would annul safety at sea. His amendment to Section 2 provides:

"That in merchant vessels of the United States of more than 100 gross tons, excepting those navigating rivers, harbors, bays or sounds exclusively, THE SAILORS, EXCLUDING MEN ASSIGNED, IN THE DISCRETION OF THE MASTER, TO DUTY AN DAY MEN, shall, while at sea, be divided into at least two, and the firemen, coal passers and water tenders into at least three watches." * * *

The joker is printed here in black-face type—but not in Mr. Free's bill. The joker would permit the master of a vessel to alternate two men on duty, steering or lookout, night or day, and place all other seamen on day duty and work them as many hours as he sees fit. There would be no limit to the work day and no possible chance for safety either to that ship or ships she may meet.

The joker would also annul a Supreme Court decision that the number of seamen on duty at night shall be the same as the number in day time.

The Free amendment is a sample of the whittling of the La Follette law that spokesmen for American and foreign vessel owners are constantly engaged in. These are agents for the shipping interest are loudest in the demand for an American merchant marine. They also lead in every effort to drive American sailors off the sea and have the ships manned by coolie labor.

WAGES COME FIRST; MEAN FULLER LIFE

Miami, Fla., Feb. 4.—"Organized labor considers wages of first importance because wages are the basis of human activity and human enjoyment," said William Green, president A. F. of L., in an address at Bayfront Park.

"The working man must depend upon wages for the education of his children, for old-age protection, for the care of dependents when he is incapacitated," said Mr. Green.

"He seeks reasonable hours of employment that he may relax from exacting toil, so that he may have time to think that the better part of his life may be developed, because man was not made to slave and die. There is something better in man. He must be given opportunity to live a full, free and comprehensive life.

"We have increased wages, shortened hours, improved work conditions, but, in addition, we have secured enactment of laws that have brought many benefits not only to wage workers directly concerned, but to the community.

"We were the pioneers in compulsory education for children. We prefer to see America's children in the school house and playground rather than toiling in factory, mill and mine."

President Green expressed regret that this is one State that has not accepted workmen's compensation. He congratulated Florida men and women who favor this principle, and predicted that eventually they will win.

"Even though you failed, the battle is not lost," said President Green. "It was only a skirmish, if you please. That is the experience of workers in every State."

DAVIS CALLS SIXTY PEAK FOR WORKERS

Pittsburgh, Pa., Feb. 4.—A man or woman of 50 or 60 years of age is just as capable a worker as he or she was at 30, and perhaps more capable, even physically, Secretary of Labor Davis told an assemblage of 3,000 veteran employees of a large manufacturing corporation here.

"The reason," said the secretary, "is that the years have brought the reward of experience and added skill. Instead of becoming a liability at 50 or 60, the intelligent worker is all the more asset to his employer."

The speaker deplored the tendency of certain employers to replace competent workers for those of younger years.

"Science has added years to the span of life," he said. "Today no one feels old at any age. We have not only abolished the feeling of old age, but people are healthier. They lead a more active life."

VACCINATION SHIELDS MAY DEVELOP LOCKJAW

Washington, Feb. 4.—Surgeon General Cumming of the United States Health Service warns against the use of any sort of vaccination shield or dressing either at the time or as one of following vaccination against smallpox.

Investigations show that such dressings produce conditions in the wound which are favorable to the development of lockjaw. The vaccinated spot will usually retain its natural covering, the skin itself, and in most cases develop a dry scab. If an open sore develops an antiseptic dressing may be applied. Several layers of gauze pinned to the inside of a loose-fitting sleeve is perhaps best for this purpose, said Dr. Cumming.

WOULD LICENSE BARBERS

Boston, Feb. 4.—Journeymen barbers and employers are supporting a bill in the state legislature that would license all workers in this calling. The sanitary features of the bill are emphasized.

OUSTED BY FASCISTS; TALKED TOO FREELY

New York, Feb. 4.—Agostino de Biasi, founder of the first Fascist group in America, and editor of an Italian newspaper in this city, has been expelled from the party. The order came from Italy. De Biasi criticised American Fascists for attempting to "frame" two Italians, recently acquitted of murdering two Blackshirts.

The expulsion is a notice to all Fascists that they must keep their mouths shut when Fascisti opponents are being railroaded to the electric chair.

TEXTILE MEN LOWER PRODUCTION TOTAL

Gastonia, N. C., Feb. 4.—Textile mills are slowing down production in conformity "to the law of supply and demand," said Wallace Hines of New York, president of the Cotton Textile Institute, in an address to 100 textile manufacturers of this vicinity.

The institute has been in orderly effort to prevent surpluses, said Mr. Walker, who pointed out that if production is not checked an overhanging surplus will break prices below production cost.

These employers, however, take a contrary position when workers insist on shorter hours to care for a surplus of laborers that has been caused by improved machinery and other new production methods.

PRIMARY LAW UPHELD BY ILLINOIS UNIONS

Chicago, Feb. 4.—The re-enactment of a state primary law is urged in a joint statement by the Illinois Federation of Labor and the railroad brotherhoods. This principle has been endangered by recent court rulings in this state.

"The primary system, even in its most imperfect form," says the statement, "is as much preferable to the convention method of selecting candidates for public office as light in public affairs is preferable to darkness and secrecy."

WINDOW WASHERS OUT

Chicago, Feb. 4.—More than 800 window washers, who risk their lives on the outside of towering office buildings in the "Loop" district, suspended work to enforce wage increases.

The strikers are affiliated to the International Building Service Employes, a unit of the A. F. of L.

"YELLOW DOG" IS INDEFENSIBLE

The "yellow dog" is called a "contract" by its anti-union defenders.

It provides that a worker waives his right to join organized labor as a price for employment.

It assumes that a worker, faced with the necessity for providing for dependents, is as free as his would-be employer.

The "yellow dog" violates the first essential of contract law—that neither party must be subject to duress; that free will rather than force (in this case, economic necessity,) must guide his action.

The "yellow dog" also violates the moral law, as expressed by every moralist from Thomas Aquinas, foremost Mediaeval scholastic:

"If a man agrees with another, and yet not freely but under compulsion of some threatened evil, such agreement can not be called peace." (Summa Theologica.)

The "yellow dog" is indefensible from every standpoint. A public conscience must be developed that this inequity is outlawed on the principle that it is against public policy.

JUDICIAL PURITY TRIUMPHS

Judge Carlos S. Hardy of Los Angeles retired from the trial of a man who confessed a brutal murder but who claimed Judge Hardy is prejudiced. The judge denied this reflection on his integrity but he quit the case rather than have the processes of law clouded.

In the Sacco-Vanzetti case the accused denied their guilt and insisted that Judge Thayer was prejudiced. They submitted several affidavits to this effect. Judge Thayer had the sole right, under the law, to pass on his own prejudice. He refused to retire.

This feature of the Sacco-Vanzetti case caused protests by organized labor and other citizens, including scores of high-grade lawyers. All insisted that no taint should be connected with the case.

That the two defendants were anarchists, draft dodgers and aliens is outside the principle that no man accused of crime should be permitted to say he was convicted in a prejudiced court.

COURT SHATTERS ANTI-UNION CLAIM

A labor union may be as interested in the wages of non-union employes, and of the conditions under which they work, as in its own members, because of the influence of one upon the other.

Organization today is not based upon the single shop. Unions believe that wages may be increased and collective bargaining maintained only if union conditions prevail not in some single shop, but generally. That they may prevail, a union may call a strike and picket the premises of an employer with the intention of inducing him to employ only union labor, and it may adopt either method separately. Picketing without a strike is no more unlawful than a strike without picketing. Both are based on a lawful purpose.

Resulting injury is incidental and must be endured.—New York State Court of Appeals.

PRODUCE TOO MUCH FOR BUYING POWER

New York, Feb. 4.—This nation can produce more than it can consume, said Charles T. Abbott, director of the American Institute of Steel Construction, at a convention of electrical manufacturers here.

Industry, said Mr. Abbott, has brought about a condition which he summed up as "the third industrial revolution."

"Practically every industry is now in a position to produce far more than its concealed market can consume. The only way it can keep the wheels in its factories turning is to organize with the object of widening its market, frequently at the expense of another industry."

Mr. Abbott offered no solution for the harmful social effects by workers being displaced by the competition and increased productivity that can not be consumed.

ATTACK COMPANY "UNION"

Albany, N. Y., Feb. 4.—Assemblyman Louis Lefkowitz has launched an attack on the company "union" in the State legislature. His bill declares employment contracts to be against public policy and void if either party agrees not to join or remain members of a labor union or organization of employers.

RADIO TRUST IS FACT; VICIOUS WAR RESULT

Washington, Feb. 4.—The radio trust claim that it was created at the government's request under the stress of war necessities, is no defense, says the Washington Post in a leading editorial.

This influential newspaper is attempting to arouse the public from the stupor that lowered the latest monopoly that will exercise undreamed of power.

The Post cites these indictments against the radio trust: Securing the lion's share of the best wave lengths; controlling all "hook ups" between chain stations; monopolizing manufacture of broadcasting machinery; monopoly of patents for radio receiving apparatus; attempting to control important short-wave channels and acquiring control of inventions relating to television, telephotography, distance actuation and other radio discoveries.

"The sponsors for the combine," says the Post, "have contended that it was created at the request of the government under the stress of war necessities. If this be true the radio trust would be one of the most dangerous burdens bequeathed by the war.

"The country is entitled to know more about it before a monopoly is permitted to entrench itself."

OLD-AGE PENSIONS URGED IN ALBERTA

Calgary, Canada, Feb. 4.—This province should pass the old-age pension act, as provided by Dominion legislation, declared the Alberta Federation of Labor at its convention here.

Under the Dominion act, provinces may adopt such system, the cost being equally divided between the Dominion and the province.

British Columbia is the one province that has accepted the pension law. The Manitoba provincial government has declared in favor of such action.

COMPANY "UNION" PLAN IS REJECTED BY MINERS

Columbus, Ohio, Feb. 4.—Striking miners in the Hocking Valley district reject the employers' plan to accept work on a "co-operative" basis and join a company "union."

Miners' officials declare that the coal owners' offer is a gesture to kill contributions to miners that is acquiring a State-wide momentum. Governor Donahey ordered the State armories thrown open to receive these contributions under direction of the National Guard.

LAWYERS BACK MOVE TO AID LABOR PEACE

New York, Feb. 4.—A committee of the American Bar Association has issued an invitation to organizations and individuals to attend meetings in this city on February 16, 17 and 18 in the interest of plans to further industrial peace. A committee representing the A. F. of L. has discussed this subject with the association.

"It will, of course, be understood," says the committee, "that neither the American Bar Association nor our committee nor any group with whom we have conferred is committed to anything in the way of legislation.

"Mr. Matthew Woll, a vice president of the A. F. of L., appeared before the committee at the 1926 hearing, and in answer to questions indicated that, in his opinion, following the lines of the Parker-Watson bill in Congress, legal validity and enforceability could and should be given to contracts resulting from mutual agreement, and intimated strongly that if, instead of stressing compulsory arbitration as a remedy, we stressed voluntary arbitration, we might have the cooperation of organized labor in our efforts."

The Parker-Watson law, referred to by the committee, provides for railroad employes and a carrier voluntarily submit their case to arbitration, the award shall be filed with the federal court of that district and same may be enforced whenever either party fails to accept the decision.

FOUR RAIL OFFICIALS CITED FOR CONTEMPT

Houston, Texas, Feb. 4.—Four high officials of the Southern Pacific Railroad were held in contempt of court by Federal Judge Hutcheson. The executives are charged with violating an injunction forbidding them to interfere with organization activities of employes.

Officials of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks proved that the officials were promoting a company "union," known as the Association of Railway Clerks.

It was alleged that the head of the company "union" was kept on the pay roll while not performing no actual service, that letters of the company "union" were being sent through the mails under franking, that the railroad maintained an office for the company "union" in the Grand Central Station in this city.

The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks secured an injunction against the rail officials last year, charging violation of the Watson-Parker Transportation Act gives them the right to organize without interference by railroad executives.

MORE HEAT ORDERED IN NEW YORK HOMES

New York, Feb. 4.—The City Board of Health has ruled that landlords of apartment houses must supply to their tenants 68 degrees of heat between 5 o'clock in the morning and 10 o'clock at night whenever the temperature on the street is 55 degrees or lower.

"It is estimated," said Health Commissioner Harris, "that there are 600,000 children under the age of 5 years and more than 100,000 persons over the age of 70 years in the city, in addition to the large number of persons who are suffering from various forms of sickness during the winter months. This ruling will be of benefit to all of this large number, and we consider that it is essential on public health grounds."

WANT HOURS LOWERED

Providence, R. I., Feb. 4.—Senator Archambault has introduced an amendment to the hours-of-labor law in the State Senate which would limit the work week to 45 hours. The present law provides for a 54-hour week and a 10-hour day.

TEXTILE WAGES SLASHED

Boston, Feb. 4.—More than 50 cotton mills with 50,000 employes in New England have reduced wages on an average of 10 per cent.

FREEDOM FOR LATIN-AMERICA; RIGHTS SHOULD NOT BE DENIED

Miami, Fla., Feb. 4.—Latin-American nations should be assured that their sovereign rights will not be interfered with, either directly or indirectly, said William Green, president A. F. of L., in a letter to Charles Evans Hughes, chairman United States delegation to the Pan-American Union, in session at Havana.

The letter is in line with declarations by the Los Angeles convention of the A. F. of L., and was approved by the Executive Council at its final session in this city.

The letter calls attention to labor's consistent opposition to interference in the internal affairs of Latin American countries.

"This is no new policy: it is traditional Americanism," said Mr. Green. "It is a policy supported by the overwhelming sentiment of the American people. Only selfish interests within the United States and abroad, which are influenced by greed and a desire for exploitation, oppose it.

"The working people of the United States are firmly convinced that cordial and friendly relations can only be maintained between all countries represented in the Pan-American Union through the development of a perfect understanding that the governments of the United States will not, at any time, participate in the affairs of any Latin-American nation and will not, either directly or indirectly, encroach upon the sovereign or territorial rights. Such a guarantee should be absolute, without reservations, and should be made in such a way as to remove all doubt in the minds of all people who reside within all countries represented in the Pan-American Union.

"The working people in the Pan-American countries should be guaranteed the right to organize and to cooperate within their respective countries in the furtherance of their legitimate, social, industrial and economic interests. The right of free speech, free assemblage and free press should not be abridged. Liberty, democracy and justice should be friends of and not autocracy and unfreedom in any form."

President Green expressed regret that the government "failed to designate a responsible representative of labor to serve either upon your delegation or in an advisory capacity."

"We, therefore, continued Mr. Green, "that the highest and best interests of the Pan-American Union could have been better served if the voice of labor was heard in the councils of this great organization."

LABOR'S ANTI-WASTE PLANS DISLIKED BY JEALOUS BOSSES

Washington, Feb. 4.—Employes' suggestions to eliminate waste and increase production are often frowned upon by managers and their immediate superiors, according to a study of this subject by Prof. Z. Clark Dickinson of the University of Michigan, which is published in the Monthly Labor Review of the United States Department of Labor.

Prof. Dickinson makes this significant statement: "The identity of the suggestor is usually kept secret by the committee receiving the suggestions since there might be a tendency on the part of the immediate superiors of the employe to undervalue or to take offense at the suggestions."

Another deterrent is the small reward given suggestors, who received the minimum award—often as low as $1—in 90 per cent of all the ideas that have evolved out of the workers' experience. Prof. Dickinson concludes:

"Finally, it is said that 'an obstacle to the maximum development of employe co-operation, system or no system, is the human weakness which these plans are designed to counteract—complacency in executives as to their own methods and judgments. The manager may decree suggestion or representation machinery, realizing perfectly that his subordinates' ideas may often be improved upon by their subordinates; but his actual intolerance of suggestion by these supervisors to himself will go far toward encouraging the same attitude in them toward their underlings, and thus toward neutralizing the co-operation program."

CAR MEN JUBILANT OVER WAGE AWARD

Chicago, Feb. 4.—Organized surface and elevated railway workers of this city are jubilant over an arbitration award for increases wages for all employes 1 cent an hour for one year and an additional 1 cent an hour the second year. A life insurance of $1,000 and a health insurance of $20 a week will be paid by the company. The latter insurance effective after an employe has been ill more than seven days.

The workers' representative on the board was Oscar F. Nelson, city alderman, and former president of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks.

More than 50 per cent of the lines are in control of a receiver, and the award has been approved by Federal Judge Wilkerson.

President Mahon of the Amalgamated Association of Street Car Men said the gains to 21,000 employes brings them back to about the highest wartime wage. The award totals $4,000,000.

MANUFACTURE OF SHIRTS MAY BE STANDARDIZED

Los Angeles, Feb. 4.—Standardization of the manufacture of shirts was the theme of conferences of manufacturers of union-made shirts and representatives of Pacific coast locals of the United Garment Workers of America. Production and wage scales were discussed. When plans are agreed to they will be presented to each local union. It is believed the outcome will eventually form a foundation for an international shirt scale.

MURDERS ARE IGNORED; PUBLIC BUSY ELSEWHERE

Denver, Feb. 4.—The Colorado Labor Advocate, official paper of the Colorado Federation of Labor, makes this caustic comment on killings of striking miners by Colorado Cossacks:

"Eight men have now been sacrificed unjustly because the public sits idly by and discusses whether or not the electrocution of two New York murderers was just, while at their doorsteps men are being slain for parading."

VESSEL OWNERS' PLAN BLOCKED BY SENATORS

Washington, Feb. 4.—The Jones shipping bill, favored by a majority of the Senate is opposed by the administration and by American and foreign vessel owners.

The bill provides, in effect, for a government merchant marine until such time as ship owners abandon their plotting to have government-owned ships scrapped, that they may raise ocean freight rates and have the United States treasury dump subsidies into their coffers.

The private owners have attempted several times to increase freight rates, but laid-up government vessels were put into commission and the plan was defeated. The private owners now demand that the government ships be scrapped. This would give them a free hand to raise rates and aid in their campaign for subsidies.

President Coolidge indicated approval of this policy when he declared, in his last message to Congress, that the government retire from the shipping business.

To cover their tracks the private owners and allies lustily howl for an American merchant marine, but a majority of the Senators are not fooled. These Senators favor the Jones bill, as this is the only bill that will eventually force the profiteers into line. Until then, the government ships will be held.

OIL SUBSTITUTES DISPROVES SCARE

Washington, Feb. 4.—The Federal Oil Conservation Board is not alarmed over oil shortage predictions. When petroleum deposits are exhausted the country can turn to oil shale, coal, corn and sugar cane for a supply of oil and gasoline, experts have said in its report to the President. Coal reserves alone assure the country 92,000,000,000 barrels of motor fuel. This is about 300 times the record production of motor fuel last year.

Some of the board's findings are interesting because of the plea of certain oil operators who would have the government control oil production, on the ground that the oil fields will be exhausted and national defense endangered.

Some of these operators, it is whispered, are more interested in checking production and increasing prices.

GIANT POWER LOBBY BREAKS ALL RECORDS

Washington, Feb. 4.—The greatest lobby in history of Montana was organized by the superpower trust to oppose an investigation of that industry, said Senator Wheeler of Montana before the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee.

"I had hoped to conduct an impartial investigation and bring out the good as well as the bad facts, but the presence of this great power lobby has forced me into the role of prosecutor," said Senator Walsh. "It is plain to see that the good will be adequately cared for by the lobbyists."

Alleged Radicals Evade Issues; Always Discussing Individuals

Chicago, Feb. 4.—Criticism is the single contribution by so-called radicals to the efforts of organized labor, said Victor Olander, secretary of the Illinois Federation of Labor, in a joint debate with Norman Thomas, leading socialist and secretary of the League for Industrial Democracy. Mr. Olander took the negative of the resolution, "That the American Federation of Labor Is Not Constructive." He charged his opponent with indulging in the usual fault finding and discussion of individuals, rather than considering policies and principles of organized labor.

The trade unionist listed the struggles that organized labor is waging from day to day. In the national capital, in State legislatures and before city councils, the unions alone were on guard, he said. In Congress, organized labor is practically alone in opposition to vicious legislation, while so-called radicals find fault with individuals in the labor movement and attract attention by this policy.

"Conservatives," said Mr. Olander, "are those who are careful what they do and who have a keen sense of their responsibility. Radicals are those who fight regardless of the possibility of accomplishing results.

"When the ratification of the child labor amendment came up, who was it that knocked at the doors of the State legislatures and spent days urging ratification of that amendment? The central bodies of organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L. In Illinois it was the Illinois Federation of Labor No one claiming to be a radical appeared for that."

"As for injunctions against labor organizations, what radical ever offered a solution for that problem? I mean by that radical organizations, such as are represented by our good friend, Mr. Thomas. There is every phase of civil liberty in that, but it has been the exclusive job of the A. F. of L., with the help of attorneys, few of whom would care to label themselves radicals."

"Yellow Dog" Denies Natural Right; Vicious Scheme Is Basicly Immoral

Milwaukee, Jan. 4.—The "yellow dog" cannot be defended on the ground that it is a common practice, said Rev. Francis J. Haas of St. Francis Seminary in protesting to a manufacturer who has forced employes to accept this alleged contract.

"I am aware that our courts have generally upheld the legality of the contract in question, and, moreover, that it is being exacted of workers in the basic establishments in the United States," said the clergyman. "Nevertheless, it need scarcely be said that such sanctions of courts nor the prevailing practices of industry are in themselves guarantees of the rightfulness of the terms of a wage contract."

The "yellow dog" compels workers to waive their right to belong to a trade union.

"This is a right," said Dr. Haas, "which Pope Leo XIII declared is one which even a government may not abrogate. The right to bargain collectively in trade unions, according to the Pope, is rooted in human nature. In his Encyclical of 1891 he writes: 'For to enter into society of this kind is the natural right of man; and the state must provide for rights not destroy them; and if it forbids its citizens to form associations, it contradicts the very principle of its own existence, for both they and it exist in virtue of the same principle, viz.: the natural propensity of man to live in society.'

"If it be urged," continued Dr. Haas, "that is a common practice to require workers to sign the contract referred to above, may I suggest that this is likewise no reason for its justice. Numerous parallels may be taken from everyday life to bear out this statement. Adult men and women do not feel warranted to follow any standard of conduct that happens to be followed by others, even by the majority. Similarly, a general custom of industry is no justification for its application to a particular establishment."